

The Dying Man's Last Legacy

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O R,

PIOUS and AFFECTIONATE EXHORTATIONS

TO A

H O L Y L I F E.

A S I T

Was left by a Dying Man to his Wife, Children, and Servants, for their Improvement after his Death, and for the Advantage of every true Christian.

My Dearest Wife,

Well might the Ancient Philosopher call Death, that Terrible of Terribles, since it is so perfectly opposite to Nature; and Life is that which every individual Animal so much covets to Maintain; for I would fain know and see that Man that is a rational Creature, who when that Minute comes wherein there will be a total Dissolution of Soul and Body, and a perfect Annihilation of his Worldly Being, does not either receive it with great Regret, or else with Fear and Trembling; and if it be so that the Heathens had such a sense of this dismal Hour, that knew nothing they were to give an Account of, upon their Departure; well may those dread it who have heard of Christianity, since they must know that there is nothing that they have been culpable of, or deficient in through their whole Lives, but they must immediately upon their Expiration, give a severe and strict account of. They further call *Hora Mortis*, *Hora Virtutis*, and I am sure (and every good Christian will acquiesce with me) it ought to be so with every Christian, that intends to see the Face of God and his ever Blessed Redeemer, with Comfort and Satisfaction. Upon this hour depends the Being, and well Being of Soul and Body to all Eternity. Upon this hour depends the everlasting Happiness, or Misery of unhappy Man: How much then ought every Soul to look after, and hourly consider this fatal Hour, than which nothing is more certain, than which nothing more uncertain; the eternal God reserving it wholly to himself, that we might be always in a readiness and not in the least Concerned, or dread it, when it shall please him to cause its Approach.

But, my Dear, not to be too tedious in Generals, I shall descend to some particular Considerations, which immediately concern you as a Wife, and a Mother to Children; and I do not question your perusal of them, not only because they were left you by one who was so near you, but especially because I leave them to the last Legacy you ever shall receive of me in this world: and they say the words of Dying Men have a greater Impression upon the Reader, than any other whatsoever.

First then as a Wife, do not Lament and Grieve at the severe and heavy dispensation of the Almighty who knows what is best for every one, and no doubt lays it upon me, to bring me to himself, and has been pleased in his great Wisdom to put a Period to my Earthly Being, in order to bring me home to him. Therefore if you do not Repine at that which it has pleased our Heavenly Father to lay upon me. He always knows what is best for us, and hath promised not to lay *more upon his Creatures than they are able to bear*; and that if he lays great Afflictions upon them, he will give them great Patience to undergo them. When you find your Spirit sinking, Support it with the reflection of the former great goodness of God, in making us amongst his rational Creatures, but not only so, but also because he has been pleased to give us in a large measure all those things that the World affords; not only Necessaries, (which considered strictly in themselves, are much more than we could reasonably expect at his Hands, I am sure much more than we deserve; for our manifold Enormities, whereby we have so often offended so good and gracious a God) but even Extraordinaries too, so that we may very well say with the holy Psalmist, *My Cup runneth over*.

II. Be always thinking what things he has done for others, and believe that he is able to make up the loss that you at present undergo (if he sees it fit for your good) for he has graciously promised, to be a Father to the Fatherless and a Husband to the Wid-



Doctrine of God our Saviour in all things; and be sure thy own Example may be a direction to them, and Reproof also if they do amiss. This I thought fit to leave for your direction in the relation of a Mother and Governess of thy Family. But because the Words of a Father Deceased may have some Influence on my dear Children, to them therefore I shall leave somthing as a Fathers Legacy among them.

VII. As a mother, Befure you bring up your Children in the *Nurture and fear of the Lord*, and if so, you need not be Sollicitous for them, for God has promised to provide for, and take care of those that fear him. Be not over Indulgent, for the sparing the *Rod*, has often spoiled the Child. Let not thine Eye pity the Correction of thy Children: First give it so that they may be sure to enable all those Godly Exhortations and Admonitions, which you shall give them from time to time, and when they come to Years it will never be forgotten; for *Train up a Child in the way he should go, and when he is Old he will not depart from it*. I could add many things, but my time being short, I am forced to be so too; but because as I said before, the words of Dying Men have a more than ordinary influence upon the Survivers, especially where they admit of so near a Relation; I shall therefore conclude with this short Moity to my Children.

My Dear Children,

Tho you are but Young and tender, yet when you come to Years of Discretion, then you may think of, and put in practice this last Advice of your Dying Father: Be obedient to your Mother in all things, left you add to her present Affliction, to whom I refer you for all other wholesome Advice and Godly Instructions, and shall only add this one particular Head: Befure to avoid that Tympany of the Mind, I mean Ambition than which nothing is more Ridiculous, and nothing more unbecoming a Man; that which has been the Ruine of Thousands, which *Phaeton* like, soaring too high by the Wings of Ambition, have fallen under hard Destinies; and let them be as a Sea-mark, that you may avoid splitting on that Rock, which was their Ruine, and then you'll be Happy. Befure you remember this as the last Council of

Your Dying Father
F. G.

His P R A Y E R.

O Most Gracious and for ever Blessed Lord God, I humbly beseech thee, through the Merits and Mediation of thy Son Jesus Christ, to blot out all my Iniquities, and not suffer them to rise in Judgment against me, but give me such a portion of thy Grace, that I may withstand all Temptations, as well Ghostly as Bodily. Give me, I beseech thee a sure hope and confidence in the propitiatory Sufferings and Sacrifice of my Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Accept of his Death and Passion as an Atonement for my manifold Enormities, and so purifie my Heart from all sinful and Worldly Corruption, that after the expiration of this Mortal Life, I may rise to eternal Glory. And with me, O Lord, I beseech thee Bleſſe the whole Race of Mankind, but in a more especial manner all those to whom I am so near and dearly Related. Prevent them, O Lord, in all their doings with thy most Gracious Favour, and further them with thy continual Help, that in all their Works they may Glorifie thy Holy Name; Grant this for Jesus Christ's Sake, into whose Hands I recommend my Spirit. Amen.

This may be Printed. Rob. Midgley.

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